

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed February 25, 2008, the Applicant submits this Reply. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration is requested.

After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-20 remain in this application, of which claims 1 and 11 are independent. No fee is due for claims for this amendment. In the Office Action, claims 1-20 were rejected. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims Objections

Claims 6, 7, 10, 16, 17 and 20 were objected to because of various informalities. The foregoing amendments overcome this objection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 10 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for lacking antecedent basis. The foregoing amendments overcome this rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 3-11 and 13-20, of which claims 1 and 11 are independent, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 in view of references called in the Office Action, IBM Drag and IBM Multi-Icon. Dependent claims 2 and 12 were further rejected in view of Magid.

IBM Drag describes "a method for displaying a number of icons selected by the user of a system as the icons are moved across the display screen." p. 417, first paragraph. It does not describe how any of these items being dragged may be dropped at different locations. In fact, the expectation is that all of the items will be subjected to the same operation: "[W]hen the

dragged object icons are positioned over the chosen target, the user releases mouse button 2 and the corresponding action will be taken on the objects represented by the icons.” p. 418, last paragraph.

IBM Multi-Icon describes a “multi-icon” which “represents two or more icons of the same type.” p. 401, first paragraph. IBM Multi-Icon has a narrow understanding of “same” since “[i]cons are not only different between applications, but they are also different if the icon represents a minimized, opened, or unopened application window.” p. 401, second paragraph.

When the user selects a multi-icon, “the user will get a list of the icons that the multi-icon represents.” p. 401, second paragraph. Given this list, “the user can choose one of the icon entries.” p. 401, second paragraph. “[t]he user can drag an entry off of the application icon list . . . and drop it on the desktop.” p. 401, third paragraph. This technique is said to “compliment [sic] existing direct manipulation techniques,” because it allows a user to add and remove icons.

IBM Multi-Icon and IBM drag fail to describe, or render obvious, either alone or in combination, the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 11.

The Office Action presumes that one would modify the multiple icons used in IBM Drag to include the dropping steps in IBM Multi-Icon “to provide the benefit of a new technique of removing icons to compliment [sic] existing direct manipulation techniques.”

One of ordinary skill in the art would not have made such a modification to the multiple icons in IBM Drag. Moreover, even if such a modification were made, it would not result in the claimed invention.

There is nothing to suggest, in either IBM Drag or IBM Multi-icon, that the multiple icons in IBM Drag should be modified to enable a user to perform a different operation (such as the claimed “so that each of said at least two objects can be sequentially dropped at unique locations independently of other objects in said list of attached objects”) on each of the icons being moved across the display screen. Instead, the multiple icons in IBM Drag are all

subjected to the *same operation* after they are all moved together with the cursor across the display screen to be dropped at the *same location*. The multi-icon in IBM Multi-Icon is *not* being moved, and therefore, a user may select *one* of the items in the multi-icon and perform an operation (such as a select, drag and then drop) on the selected *one* item.

Moreover, IBM Multi-icon would not enable one of ordinary skill in the art to remove an item from a set of icons already being moved across the display screen with a cursor (the operation described in IBM Drag) by selecting and dragging an item from that set (the operation described in IBM Multi-icon). The multiple icon in IBM Drag is displayed as a result of a user *already* selecting and dragging a set of objects. Since the user is *already* performing a dragging operation, it is not possible to further select, drag and drop an item from within the multiple icon associated with the cursor of IBM Drag in the manner described by IBM Multi-icon. Because the multiple icons in IBM Drag are displayed at the cursor position, it is not possible to move the cursor within the displayed multiple icon (as described by IBM Multi-Icon) to further select an item.

Nonetheless, such a modification to the multiple icons in IBM Drag still would not render obvious the claimed invention. Independent claims 1 and 11 (as amended) recite “displaying a visual representation of each of said objects proximal to a current position of said cursor, as a set of icons,” and “when the user's intention to drop an object is detected, . . . , processing the dropping of a first object in said list of attached objects into said surface at a position dictated by the current position of said cursor.” IBM Multi-icon describes a method where an icon is removed from a list by dragging the icon to another location away from the list. The claims recite that the “set of icons” is displayed at the “current position of the cursor” and the dropping of the object occurs at the “current position of the cursor.” The Office Action’s proposed combination of IBM Drag and IBM Multi-icon does not render obvious both displaying the set of icons and dropping an object at the current position of the cursor.

Accordingly, the rejection of independent claims 1 and 11 should be withdrawn.

The remaining claims are dependent claims, and are not rendered obvious by IBM Drag and IBM Multi-icon for at least the reasons claims 1 and 11 are not rendered obvious.

Moreover, dependent claims 3, 4, 13 and 14 each include a "next object to be dropped." Neither IBM Drag nor IBM Multi-icon describes a "next object to be dropped located at a [top or left]-most position of said [column or row]." In IBM Drag all dragged objects are subject to the same operation, whereas in IBM Multi-Icon, a user must select an object to be removed. Thus neither reference describes a "next object to be dropped" based on the location of the object in a list of objects.

Accordingly, the rejection of claims 3, 4, 13 and 14 should be withdrawn for at least this additional reason.

Dependent claims 2 and 12 were further rejected based on Magid. However, these claims depend from independent claims 1 and 11, respectively, and therefore are not rendered obvious by IBM Drag and IBM Multi-icon and Magid for at least the reasons claims 1 and 11 are not rendered obvious.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the outstanding rejections should be withdrawn. If the Examiner believes, after this reply, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicants hereby request any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, please charge any fee to Deposit Account No. 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 23769-0003001.

Respectfully submitted,

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